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REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the consideration given the present application and note the allowance of claims 12-14, 16, and 18.

By the present Amendment, claim 6 is cancelled, and dependent claims 19 and 20 are added. Claims 19 and 20 are similar to claims 15 and 17 but depend from claim 2. As a result, claims 1-18 are pending, of which claims 1, 2, 7, and 12 are independent.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 1-9, 15, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Davies et al. (U.S. 6,839,767).

To expedite prosecution, independent claim 1 is amended to recite a method of managing a plurality of user accounts assigned to a computer entity having a combination of steps, including determining an overall predicted future utilization of functionality of the computer entity which will be required to support the plurality of user accounts, the predicted future utilization differing from utilization at the present time.

Claim 2 includes the subject matter of original claims 1 and 2 rewritten in independent form. As amended, independent claim 2 is also directed to a method of managing a plurality of user accounts assigned to a computer entity having a combination of steps, including determining an overall predicted future utilization of

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functionality of the computer entity which will be required to support the plurality of user accounts; comparing the predicted utilization of functionality with a currently available amount of unused functionality of the computer entity; allowing or disallowing addition of a new user account onto the computer entity, depending upon a result of the comparison; and for each user account, generating a predicted usage of functionality provided by the computer entity over a predetermined look-ahead period.

Independent claim 7 is directed to a computer entity having a combination of elements, including a compare component for comparing a predicted future utilization of the plurality of user accounts with a data storage capacity currently available for use on the data storage device, and a control component arranged to activate the prediction component and compare component.

In contrast to the method and device set forth in amended independent claims 1, 2, or 7, Davies is directed to an admission controller and method for controlling the admission of data flowing into an aggregate data flow for transmission over a data network (see Abstract). Davies does not disclose a method of managing a plurality of user accounts assigned to a computer entity as required by independent claims 1 and 2, which includes the step of predicting future utilization of the functionality required to support user accounts, or the prediction component of claim 7 for predicting the

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future utilization of data storage capacity for multiple user accounts. In Davies, admission controller 20 at sender 4 determines the acceptability of a new data communications session depending on the available communications bandwidth (column 11, lines 53-61). The number of sessions is controlled to avoid congestion (column 8, lines 34-64). Data packets are received from source 12 at sender 4. If it is determined that the packets relate to a new data communications flow, sender 4 requests a new session from admission controller 20 (column 9, lines 35-65).

Davies does not disclose or suggest user accounts, nor is an entity disclosed that could be considered the equivalent of a user account. In Davies, if a data packet is received that relates to a new flow, a new session is requested irrespective of the source (12) from which it originated. Source 12 could be involved in a number of different data communications flows simultaneously or over a period of time. This has no bearing on the operation of Davies' system and method.

Furthermore, Davies does not disclose determining overall predicted future utilization of functionality of the computer entity required to support the plurality of user accounts defined by amended independent claims 1 and 2. Each data flow is treated individually by admission controller 20, and each data flow does not change, nor is it expected to change, in bandwidth utilization over

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time. Rather, sender 4 periodically measures current bandwidth usage (column 11, lines 53-54). Measuring current usage is not the same as predicting future usage. Making decisions based on current usage assumes the measured value will not change over time, while a predicted future usage does not, an aspect of the present invention made clear by independent claims 1, 2, and 7.

Davies does not disclose comparing the predicted utilization of functionality with the currently available amount of unused functionality of the computer entity and allowing and disallowing the addition of a new user account onto the computer entity depending on the results of the comparison. In Davies, a local threshold is calculated (column 11, lines 4-11). If the current bandwidth utilisation plus that required for the new session is less than the threshold, the request is granted; if not, the request is denied (column 11, line 64, through column 12, line 6).

Nowhere does Davies disclose the features of Applicants claims 2-5. The portions of column 11 referred to in the Office Action actually relate to the **reaction** to receiving a congestion notification by reducing the threshold (and subsequently increasing the threshold if no congestion notification is received for a period of time). A reaction is not a prediction.

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For at least the foregoing reasons, independent claims 1, 2, and 7 are not anticipated by Davies. Claims 3-5, 8, 15, 17, 19, and 20 depend on and are allowable with independent claims 1, 2, and 7.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 10 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Davies in view of Datta et al. (U.S. 6,209,033). (The statement in item 11 on page 4 of the Office Action that claims 10 and 11 are rejected over "Davis et al. (US 5,848,270) as applied to claims 1-9, 15 and 17 above, in view of Datta et al." is believed to be a clerical error, since claims 1-9, 15, and 17 are rejected as being anticipated by Davies, whereas U.S. 5,848,270 is another reference of record, DeLuca et al.)

Claims 10 and 11 depend on and are allowable with independent claim 7 which, as noted above, is directed to a computer entity having a combination of elements, including a compare component for comparing a predicted future utilization of the plurality of user accounts with a data storage capacity currently available for use on the data storage device, and a control component arranged to activate the prediction component and compare component. Datta fails to cure the deficiencies of Davies as a primary reference discussed above with respect to the rejection of claim 7.

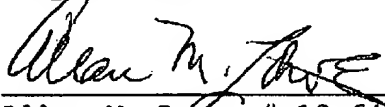
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, favorable reconsideration and allowance are in order, and such action is respectfully requested.

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To the extent necessary, Applicants hereby request any required extension of time not otherwise requested and hereby authorize the Commissioner to charge any required fees not otherwise paid, including application processing, extension, and extra claims fees, to Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted,  
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